

**City of Durham**  
 Business License Unit  
 101 City Hall Plaza, Durham, NC 27701  
 (919) 560-4700  
 businesslicense@ci.durham.nc.us

**General Merchant Privilege License Application Instructions**

The following regulations and classifications are taken from Article I, Privilege License Tax Ordinance of the City of Durham, and are intended solely as a summation. For additional or complete information, see Ordinance No. 9167, License and Privilege Tax Ordinance.

<b>(Please read application instructions carefully)</b>	
<b>Who Must Pay Tax:</b>	Any person who conducts business within the City of Durham, either by maintaining a business location within the City of Durham or, either personally or through agents, solicits business within the City of Durham, or picks up and/or delivers goods or services within the City of Durham, is liable for the City's Privilege License Tax unless specifically exempted by federal, state law, or local ordinance. If a company or individual is engaged in more than one type of business activity within the City of Durham, a separate license may be required for each type of business activity. A separate license is required for each business location in the City of Durham. (Sec.4)
<b>License Tax Due Date:</b>	The Privilege License Tax must be paid before a business may be located and/or begin operating in the City of Durham. All licenses expire on June 30 <sup>th</sup> . Renewal notices are sent to licensed businesses during the month of May. If you do not receive a renewal notice by May 31 <sup>st</sup> , please contact the Privilege License Unit at (919) 560-4700 or at our email address: businesslicense@ci.durham.nc.us.
<b>To Apply for A Privilege License:</b>	Please complete all questions on the Privilege License application. An application can not be processed without the following information: Zoning approval – (if applicable), Business name, Business start date in Durham, Physical location of business, Business Contact information, Description of business activity, & Signature of person making application.
<b>Determine Amount of Tax Due:</b>	Please examine the Privilege License Tax Schedule to determine the tax section(s) that apply to your business activity and determine the appropriate license tax. Multiple tax sections may apply to businesses that have several business activities. Please follow the instructions for each of the tax schedules. Businesses that operate within the City of Durham without a privilege license are subject to pay the back privilege license taxes and penalties. Please do not hesitate to call the Privilege License office at (919) 560-4700, if you need assistance with calculating the Privilege License tax for your business.
<b>Payment:</b>	Please mail your payment, application, and City/County Planning Department Zoning Verification form to the City of Durham, Business License Unit, 101 City Hall Plaza, Durham, NC 27701. Please make your check or money order payable to the "City of Durham". Do not send cash through the mail. Cash payments are only accepted if submitted with your application in person at our City Hall Location.
<b>Display of license:</b>	The license will be processed and mailed to the contact person listed on the application. Upon receipt, this license must be posted conspicuously where business is conducted. If a machine is licensed, the license should be affixed to the machine. (Sec .27)
<b>Other General Information:</b>	
<b>No abatement of tax:</b>	If a licensee discontinues a business before the end of the period for which the license was issued, the license tax shall not be abated nor shall a refund of any part of the license tax be made. (Sec.7)
<b>Collection of unpaid tax:</b>	Any business that begins or continues to engage in a business taxed under the License and Privilege Tax Ordinance of the City of Durham, without payment of such tax, is liable for past due taxes plus an additional penalty of five percent (5%) of the original tax due for each month or portion thereof that the tax is delinquent to a maximum penalty of (25%). The Minimum tax penalty is \$5.00.
<b>Change of place of business:</b>	In order for your business to receive annual renewal notice and other correspondence in a timely manner, Please notify the Privilege License office if the location of your business, or your business mailing address has changed. You will need to contact the City/County Planning department to advise of the change of address and obtain an updated zoning letter. Please provide a copy of the zoning letter along with your request for change of address.
<b>Other licenses:</b>	City Beer and Wine Licenses are required by the City of Durham. A separate application must be completed. Please contact the City of Durham Privilege License Office at (919) 560-4700 for a Beer and Wine License Application. (Sec. 68)
<b>Disclaimer:</b>	The issuance of a privilege license does not constitute acceptance or approval of the use of the above named location as having complied with existing building codes, fire prevention code, zoning code, city ordinance, or state law. A licensee shall remain fully liable and responsible for bringing the premises in conformity with all applicable City and State Codes.

**Keep this sheet for future reference**